

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-11

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15

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FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2346

INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMONSUL PERTH

AMCONSUL PORT MORESBY

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

UNCLAS MELBOURNE 1106

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, AS

SUBJECT: OPENING SESSION OF ASIAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF POSTAL,
TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE INTERNATIONAL (PTTI) MARKED BY
TRIBUTES TO AMERICAN UNION LEADER.

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REF: MELBOURNE 1071

1. DELEGATES FROM 17 COUNTRIES, REPRESENTING 32 AFFILIATED UNIONS, ON SEPTEMBER 16, 1974 OPENED WEEK-LONG CONFERENCE IN MELBOURNE. LARGEST DELEGATION WAS FROM JAPAN FOLLOWED CLOSELY BY HOST UNION AMALGAMATED POSTAL WORKERS UNION OF AUSTRALIA (APWU) AND LARGE GROUP FROM NEARBY NEW ZEALAND.

2. AFTER WELCOMING ADDRESS BY AUSTRALIAN OFFICER, PTTI GENERAL SECRETARY STEPHAN NEDZYNSKI READ TELEGRAM OF GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT GLENN WATTS OF COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA (CWA) AS FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS.

3. ALL SPEAKERS AT MORNING SESSION, INCLUDING POSTMASTER GENERAL OF AUSTRALIA; NORMAN STAG, BRITISH OBSERVER FROM U.K. UNION OF POST OFFICE WORKERS; NEWLY-ELECTED PRESIDENT OF PTTI IVAN REDDICH OF NEW ZEALAND; AND NEDZYNSKI AGAIN IN HIS OFFICIAL ADDRESS, PAID GLOWING TRIBUTE TO JOE BEIRNE AND EXPRESSED SYMPATHY WITH CWA AND MRS. BEIRNE. MOST SPEAKERS ALSO NOTED WITH REGRET THE PASSING OF WILFRED PERERA OF SRI LANKA.

4. PRESIDENT REDDICH'S REMARKS RELATING TO JOE BEIRNE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

"MR. CHAIRMAN, THE HONORABLE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, DISTINGUISHED GUEST, BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE PTTL. IT IS MY GREAT HONOR TO ADDRESS THIS CONFERENCE AS WORLD PRESIDENT OF PTTL. I SINCERELY REGRET THE TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCES LAST WEEK WHICH BROUGHT ABOUT MY ELEVATION TO THE PRESIDENCY. THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF PRESIDENT JOE BEIRNE HAS SADDENED ALL OF US. JOE'S DEATH LEAVES A GAP IN OUR RANKS IMPOSSIBLE TO FILL IN THE SHORT RUN. JOE BEIRNE WAS A DEDICATED TRADE UNION LEADER, CAPABLE, DYNAMIC AND DEDICATED TO THE IDEALS OF FREE TRADE UNIONISM AND TO THE PURPOSEFUL STRUGGLE TO MAKE THIS WORLD OF OURS A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE IN. JOE WAS ALWAYS CONCERNED ABOUT FREEDOM AND THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO LIVE A FULL AND SATISFYING LIFE. HE WILL BE SADLY MISSED. I AM SURE THAT ALL DELEGATES

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SEATED AT THIS CONFERENCE WOULD WISH THAT MESSAGES OF SYMPATHY BE SENT TO MRS. BEIRNE AND HER FAMILY AND ALSO TO THE CWA."

5. ADDRESSING CONFERENCE DURING AFTERNOON SESSION BOB HAWKE, SPEAKING AS PRESIDENT OF THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS (ACTU) AND ALSO AS PRESIDENT OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY (ALP) SPOKE AT LENGTH OF THE BRIEF BUT WARM

RELATIONSHIP THAT HAD EXISTED BETWEEN HIMSELF AND JOE BEIRNE. HAWKE RECOUNTED THE GOOD REACTION THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA TO BEIRNE'S 1973 VISIT. HE ALSO TOLD IN DETAIL OF THE "SPLENDID RECEPTION" AFFORDED HIM AND MRS. HAWKE WHEN THEY PASSED THROUGH WASHINGTON IN JULY OF THIS YEAR. HE TOLD DELEGATES IN DETAIL OF THE DINNER EXTENDED TO THEM BY CWA. HIS REMARKS WERE NOT PART OF HIS PRINTED ADDRESS.

6. LABATT FEELS THESE TRIBUTES, MANY MADE INFORMALLY BY AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, REFLECT JOE BEIRNE'S POPULARITY HERE AND THE IMPACT HE MADE DURING HIS BRIEF VISIT IN 1973.
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